

September 23, 2011

Dear Parent(s),

A big **thank you to all of the parents that attended our Technology Night** on Tuesday. We hope you found the information helpful and that you were able to access the resources at home without any problems. To those parents that were not able to attend, please check out the attached file that attempts to show you the wiki page as best we can without sitting at a computer. We use the wiki page to post daily work and handouts and we hope that parents will use this resource as much as the kids.

Now that technology night is over we want to remind you to mark your calendars for our next parent event which is the book club. This is something new we are trying across grade level with all teachers. **This book club is for teachers, parents, and students and will take place on October 4<sup>th</sup> from 7:00-8:00 p.m.** We are hoping to have a book club night at least one time each quarter. Our selected title is Schooled by Gordan Korman. If you signed up to get information about this at open house in August you should have already been contacted via email. If you were not contacted and have an interest, please email your child's homeroom teacher to get a copy of the book. You are welcome to attend one or all of our book clubs.

If your child loves books then they will enjoy next week. On Monday at 10:00a.m the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> graders will get an opportunity to listen to **Patrick Carman**. He is the author of the Skeleton Creek series that combines a story line with short video clips that are accessed online. He has a new series coming out called Floors. On Friday we will also be attending a theater performance. The performance is based on **John Grisham's Theodore Boone series**. "Theodore Boone and the Thrill of Rights" is an interactive show aimed at children ages 8 and up featuring the acclaimed children's theater group, The Story Pirates.

We have also started **guidance classes**. Mrs. Reinke will visit each classroom two times per month to discuss social issues such as peer pressure, how to handle stress, and bullying. She does a great job with the kids and also explains to each class how they can contact her throughout the year if they feel that a discussion with a counselor would help them in any way.

Last week we cut some time from writer's workshop to squeeze in some lessons for all students on **geocaching** in preparation for our October field trip. The smoke from the fires in Minnesota and the directive we were given to limit outside activities put a kink in our schedules but we were able to modify and get everyone geocaching by the end of the week.

With all of these things happening, we still keep going in all subject areas. Here are the subject updates:

**Reading:** We continue to get to know our students through conferencing in the classroom while they are independently reading. We continue to build reading partnerships with peers and will start doing more with written responses to what we are reading in our composition books in the upcoming weeks. Just a reminder that students should be completing reading logs when they are reading. These are in a bookmark format and additional copies are available on the wiki page if your child needs to print one out from home. The expectation is that kids are reading at home in addition to time given in school.

**Math:** We completed Unit 1 this week with a test on Friday. We will do some regrouping for Unit 2 which focuses on operations with whole numbers and decimals. If your child struggles with math homework and you are not sure how to help, look for a blue symbol in the math journal that has SRB across the top and a number in the middle. This corresponds to a page number in their Student Reference Book (hardcover book) that gives examples and information needed to solve that type of problem. This is a very helpful resource that often gets ignored by kids and adults.

**Writing:** We continue to work on drafting personal narratives. Work has slowed a bit as we cut some writing time for geocaching but we are back on track now. We are hoping to finish these papers by the end of the month. Look for a parent edit sheet by the end of next week.

**Science** (remember this only applies to Mr. Ryan's homeroom at this time): We have finished our discussion about what causes the seasons and had our first quiz this week. We continue to work with models and used a technology program called Starry Night to make some observations this week. Next week we will focus on the phases of the moon.

**Social Studies** (applies to Mrs. Charles's and Mrs. Hall's homerooms): The students brought in their own civilization projects this week and we presented them while learning more about the cultural universals. Next week we will begin our first unit on Ancient Civilizations out of the book.

### **Upcoming Dates**

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| September 30 | Early release – dismissal at 12:55                |
| October 4    | Teacher, parent, student book club 7:00 p.m.      |
| October 7    | 5/6 activity night and dance at SLI               |
| October 13   | Field trip to Retzer Nature Center – pack a lunch |
| October 18   | Picture Retake Day                                |

### **Fun Stuff**

Mr. Fredricks celebrated his birthday this week. He also entertained Mrs. Hall's class with some stories about his identical twin brother. Mrs. Hall is happy to report that her husband finished the Ironman in 13 hours and 32minutes. Mrs. Charles and Mrs. Hall got to attend a conference on autism this week and learned some really interesting stuff. Mr. Ryan is feeling much better after getting a touch of the flu bug on Monday. Mrs. Charles and Mr. Ryan went to Retzer Nature Center last Saturday to plan for our geocaching trip and had a bonding experience when they were rear-ended leaving a few scratches on the bumper of Mrs. Charles's vehicle.